TUNING SCORES LOG
2009-2015

Margit Galanter

Tuning Scores Log / Embodied Language and Culture

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Tallahassee Tuning

April 7, 2015

by Margit Galanter

I am currently in Tallahassee, FL in a project organized by HIJACK Dance in collaboration with the MANCC Residency at FSU. What all the letters mean, is a group of us had the supported opportunity to practice Tuning Scores altogether; Arwen Wilder, Karen Nelson, Kristin Van Loon, Lisa Nelson, Morgan Thorson, Naomi Joy, and myself. It has been just one of those experiences….. from the beginning, "go" ~ we worked specifically with single image scores, blind trio unison, and the Go score…. and experienced how Go manages to contain the rest, and how in the "Aftermath" of one (to quote HIJACK) the next is effected…..

I am deeply in the practice of the call "Delay," — of consideration before action, of feeling the space of waiting, the potentiality, the movement around that continues even despite the delaying, the possibility for being in action while still delaying the action at the moment of the call. Also reveling in how much is seen the slower we get, how in this "Theater of Opinions" (an earlier term used by Lisa for the Scores) when

people have strong and clear desires, it is so damn exciting, and how liminal space offers polar tone in relation to organized, singular action. And what it feels like to be along the spectrum…. the clarity of the shared image space helps to register where one is along the slide.

We seemed to have this alternating experience of complexity <-> clarity and back again…. so the complex “improvisations” — when we weren’t all clear where we began, one time making calls from within warming-up rather than setting up a shared intention — managed to help invoke a desire for clarity which we all followed that then in turn led to the next curious confusion, back into the sublime sense of being in something together that tuning can provide. Why is this a familiar patterning, the alternation of clarity and confusion?

Thanks to the visionary HIJACKers for bringing us together, to Lisa for editing us all, to Carla Peterson for helming the operation, the whole MANCC crew, and particularly Chris Cameron, who took the stunning pictures below, all from the first day, from where we kept on going:

From Behind the curtains

Blind Trio Unison with students at FSU Dance, at the Forum where Lisa facilitated an exchange

Morgan working magic with a big table object/subject

Lisa at the Forum

A recurring theme

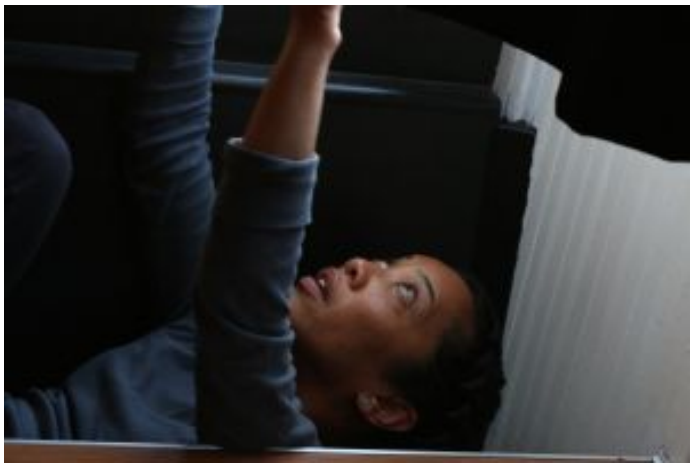
All photos by Chris Cameron

Tuning at the Starline, Relay

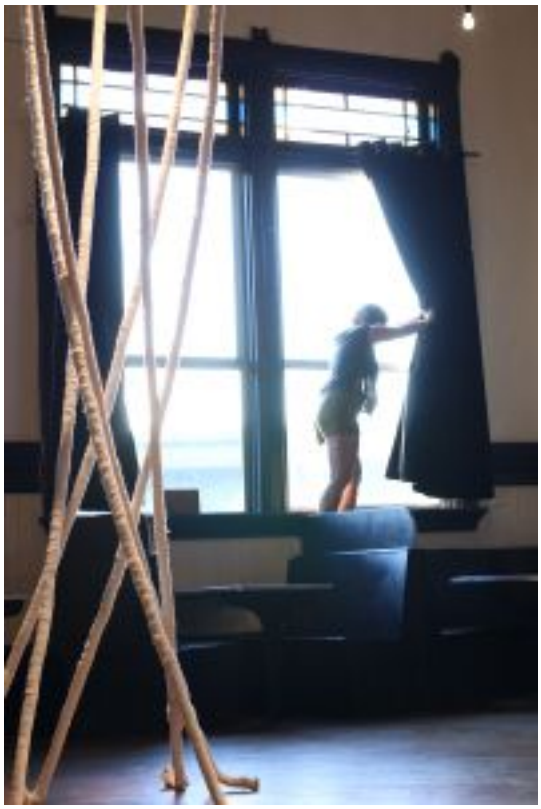
June 8, 2014
by Margit Galanter

This past weekend, I performed with a group of art brilliants at the Starline Ballroom. This was part of a larger research in dance poetry, called the *Relay* Project. To introduce the evening-length solo, a posse Tuned the Space. As people entered into the Ballroom, we were in the midst…. the intention was that they would be able to experience the space in a way that revealed its architecture, tone, the space iteself, perhaps to open up a world of viewing for the full evening, not unlike reading a good poem. Below are some of the beautiful images taken by Chani Bockwinkel. She somehow captured the mystery and the spaciousness of the tuning investigations, and warmed the view of the solo.

Tuning the Space, with Aarian + Armaan Chacko-Whiting, Asia Wong, Frances Rosario, Kathleen Keogh, Mara Poliak, Maureen Whiting, nicholas andre sung, and MG:



the Solo – *Discovering New Species*:



Let the light in, ring it in, let it move us, move and be moved….

And I honestly don’t really know what all actually took place in the solo, but that it was an amazing experience this run to let

it unfold, to open up with and for the audience, with whom we had tuned…., I was tracking, felt it, felt the feltedness. **Tuning to the environment, the space, the Dance**

To share the odd state of post- performance, through a performed conversation with Justin Desmangles – a composed presentation of talking, choosing quite consciously to not invite in others to be in the dialogue, which would have made some other kind of alchemy, rather to let people see/witness what it means when two people engage in the meeting of minds + ideas….Even as mine was so mottled from the dance. **A kind of Tuning**

It is so wild now, after a show, to experience its dissolution, disappearance, integration (so much nameless), and watch reflections rise up.

I am so looking forward to performing again this afternoon at Ellen Webb's studio with Denise and Violet, ….and you, might you join us?

Tuning Relay at Berkeley Art Museum

May 12, 2014

by Margit Galanter

Sunday, May 4, a posse of movement artists Tuned at BAM. The event was part of the Possible, a unique experiment in participatory art-making taking place these months. This particular iteration of Tuning was curated by Asia Wong. The event was a great way to begin to enact a tuning that will take place on MAY 31, as part of the Relay Performance series. Thanks to all who participated, including Sarah Pritchard, Kathleen Keogh, Cathie Caraker, Katarina Eriksson, Qilo Matzen, Renee Rhodes, Jennifer Marie Hoff, Marcia Scott, Maureen Whiting + her sons Armaan + Aarian Chacko-Whiting, Catharine Brook Anderson, Asia Wong, and MG. Here are some of the many fantastic images by Greek photographer Nicholas Komodore.

The LINK:

http://mayakov-plus-sky.blogspot.com/2014/05/studies-in-somatic-architecture-and.html

A brief tuning video experiment

March 18, 2014
by Margit Galanter

Ray, Margit and Sheri on video

https://vimeo.com/86353077

In January, Sheri Cohen came down from Seattle, and we got together with Ray Chung and had a Tuning session. It was very open in the dancing, and we began to make calls from a kind of open movement run.

At some point during the session, Sheri brought out her portable video camera that attaches to the ear, so you can video from moving, hands-free, in dance. This one clip is a small piece of our tuning, through her moving eyes. Once thing that I like about this fuzzy little video is that there seems to be no formalized

up and down, as if the image space here is formed through a moving perceiver, in action.

To quote J.J. Gibson in *Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems* (1966), an inspiration for Tuning Scores:

The ways in which animals and men pick up information by looking, listening, sniffing, tasting, and touching are the subject of this book. These five perceptual systems overlap one another; they are not mutually exclusive. They often focus on the same information – that is the same information can be picked up by a combination of perceptual systems working together as well as by one perceptual system working alone. The eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin can orient, explore, and investigate. When thus active, they are neither passive senses nor channels of sensory quality, but ways of paying attention to whatever is constant in the changing stimulation….

This quote is invoked in the moving body beings picking up dance, and in our states as we tune.

Point Reyes Poetry

December 7, 2013
by Margit Galanter

Here is a poem written by Deidre Martin in response to her time attuning into Point Reyes:

Tuning in Point Reyes

The sliver of a five day moon
offers paths on sandy bluffs
clearings in pine woods of
otherwise dark ravines down
deep in doubt about enough
food and water, and lodging.
Alone, with only feelings and
my breath to attune desire.

◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇

Later, together, we will perceive and do be wild like nature. Report. Pause. Rewind. Show off your gorilla dance that I thought only the Congolese women knew but then I saw your moves and facial expression, the memory of a child's imagination. Create then go home isolate again in the name of poetry for the dancers with their baskets of stories of lost fathers and drying bay nuts.

How will the score continue or end? Slow motion is okay but please do not call out during original phrase or movement. Wait. Find out what is not seen or heard, outside the five senses, and allow it to unfold. Feel our intentions and dance, dance, dance.

d.martin SF 11/12/13

At the edge of water Tuning

August 30, 2013

by Margit Galanter

This summer in July, I had the opportunity to practice tuning with Sheri Cohen in Seattle. (Surprise), it was an overcast day, and we found ourselves trading solos and replaying at Stewart Park by the water's edge. Some basic calls were made, but more silence, listening, crossing with passersby. Somehow, the effect of the images in my memory are a mix between an ancient crawling spaciousness, Isadora Duncan flow expressed, and a quiet waking up. The space of listening. Amidst the other activities of living, what awakens through Tuning is a vast sensibility of the space, the image space, one's own spaciousness as layered, multisensorial. Vivid.

I was holding the camera mid-way through our session, and later on she took a whirl, as well. Some images:

sheri isadora

in go

to the aperture

shift

dendrolotry

we

Karen Nelson’s “Tune a Banana” Workshop

April 13, 2011

by Margit Galanter

Karen Nelson came to the Bay Area March 2011. It was a wonderful immersion; we lived in the embodiment of CI into *Material for the Spine* rolls into her unique sensation and design that is Tuning. You can really see the practice in the forms thru our actions in the image space- that clarity that comes from the specificities of rolling with Steve’s “perfect forms”. On the second day, we ended up in a run that had a delightful score; it had an accumulation from a solo who called “begin” into a pause – an invocation for the next to enter in…. Here are some of the pics from that finale:

pics by the group

must tune again.

Tuning Lab 2010

December 19, 2010

by Margit Galanter

Ray Chung and I put together a tuning lab for the month of November in the Bay Area. It was great to have the opportunity to work consistently with a group of core people, to get into the scores in an introductory kind of way, to feel the *time-sense* of tuning and to work with the single image score as a trajectory. It’s a good part of the process of building the ground here and having a way to practice tuning at home. I took some pics the last night, which was an intimate group of Jai, Abby, Mara, and myself. It cut close enough to holidays and flu season that we were 4. Our work was its own kind of culmination.

Something about being behind the lens; I literally am moved to make an image from the view of the viewer. My own motion and framing are elements of my trace in the image.

Indeed, new language develops, even that which is nascent. In the end of our final lab, I was invited to mention some other ways we could be working, and we took the bite and closed our eyes and said “go” – the world opened up.

MPLS Tuning Hardcore

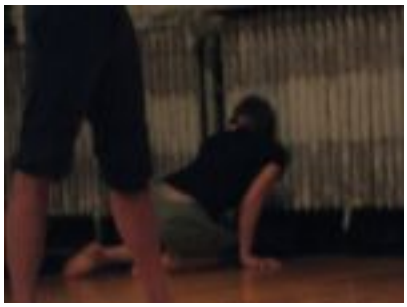
September 30, 2010

by Margit Galanter

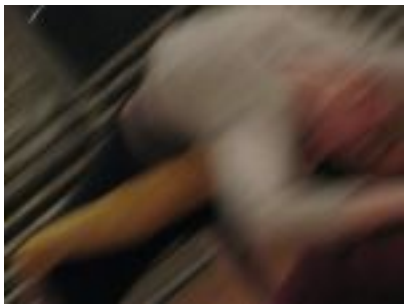
Minneapolis, September 2010. KVL presents. Photographic images are so selective. They require the recognition and desire to pick up the camera, the camera being readily available. They show an individual's momentary eye, and possibly the whole organization and flight. These images invite so many more moments: duets, the soft skin of partners, of the roughness of the brick walls, days of working, the development of our scores. These pics are a small offering to jog the sensorial in a project – enter into the movement, bring on the deluge.

We were delving into what it means to make a phrase from the multisense, using solo propositions, replays, holding back on the calls over and over, working with "phase" and "phrase." We discovered a "resituate" call after the solo situates itself in a single image, before the the mover calls begin as a way to show the communally-observed image space. Found the desire to remove it once shown, then to remove it altogether. Pairing down. Little by little the tuning grew. A big hearty group in the middle of the country – the generosity of an independent dance scene felt in the daily practice. -mg

solo replays:



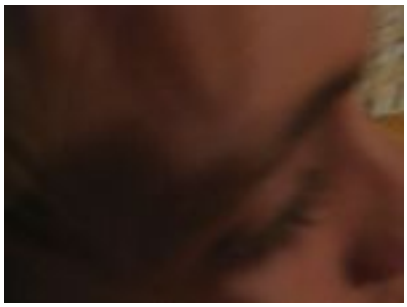
calling “phase”:

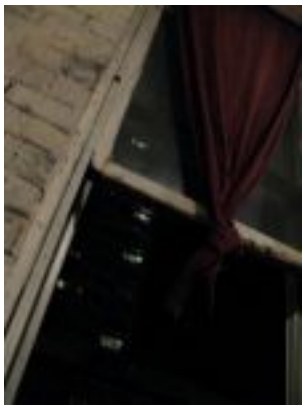


on break:

In the replay of Morgan and Chris’ memorable duet:

Final Evening. As I recall, this below was a version of solo replay wherein once the solo was established, an individual could enter to make a duet, after which “end” would be called. I entered with the camera… then later came a replay, or was it a replace, where Tristan decided to remain in the image? The simplicity of the initial proposition, after the wild physicality of a hair duet with Robert dancing, perched above on a radiator:





September Tuning HardCore Participants:

Arwen Wilder

Chris Schlichting

Cindy Stevens

Deborah Jinza Thayer

Hannah Kramer

Jeffry Lusiak

Jen Johanneson

Jennifer Arave

Justin Jones

Karen Sherman

Kristin Van Loon

Margit Galanter

Megan Mayer

Melissa Birch

Molly Van Avery

Monica Thomas

Morgan Thorson

Robert Haarman

Sam Johnson

Sarah Jacobs

Sophia Rog

Taja Will

Tara King

Theresa Madaus

Tristan Koepke

TAC – 12/18/09

December 23, 2009

by Margit Galanter

“begin”. viewers call “phase”s (or were we at “phrase”?). player eyes open/close. “replace”. “pause”. “end”.

Eyes

December 6, 2009

by Elizabeth Harvey

Jack London Square. The cabin – a little historic remnant looking out towards the bay – was irresistible when it came time to try out the role of mover (watched by the "reader", i.e. Margit).

When you look for a nice length of time at an image, noodling through it, returning to different aspects of it, you find that it has lodged in your mind's long-term memory banks. It's an image in the bank – you can return to it and muse some more. Similarly, moving in response to the space around me has taught me things about those spaces that I carry with me. For the long haul. I know some things about the surface now of the rock next to the cabin, and I know you can swing from one of the logs of that ersatz cabin (built from half the logs from the original one). And what it feels & looks like to march and hop along its walls, world jiggling around.

Each time I "tune" I find the selective nature of the exercise opens up a rush of appreciation for each sense that we are exploring. The muscles in my eyes were thanking me for finally moving them in their radial paths, eyes closed, feeling the multitude of possibilities there. Kind of ache-y, kind of pleasant, working those muscles. Eyes open, glomming on to objects and moving around them – close up, far away, jumping,

lying down. I got to thinking: how we are constructed has everything to do with how we construct our reality.

Weirdly, I don't remember ever having thought about how my eyes move in tandem, except when cross-eyed. Like driving a car for the first time, a little hard to control every nuance of movement. Eye dances.

I was looking at a clock today that had the seconds ticking off – using numbers flipping by. What a reminder that our time on this earth is limited – there go the seconds – flying by. So with this in mind, "tuning" in feels like a crux of something. A meditation: these perceptual specifics… from which cascade our experiences. So, everything since each tuning can start to feel like a waterfall, except one that radiates outward and the spray can go on forever, if you keep the experience in mind, as a lens through which to view one's everyday life. Presence.

Last thought: walked along the Truckee River and visited Donner Lake over Thanksgiving break and had fun using movements to explore both spaces. Again, spaces lodged now in my whole body memory.

whole body home movies

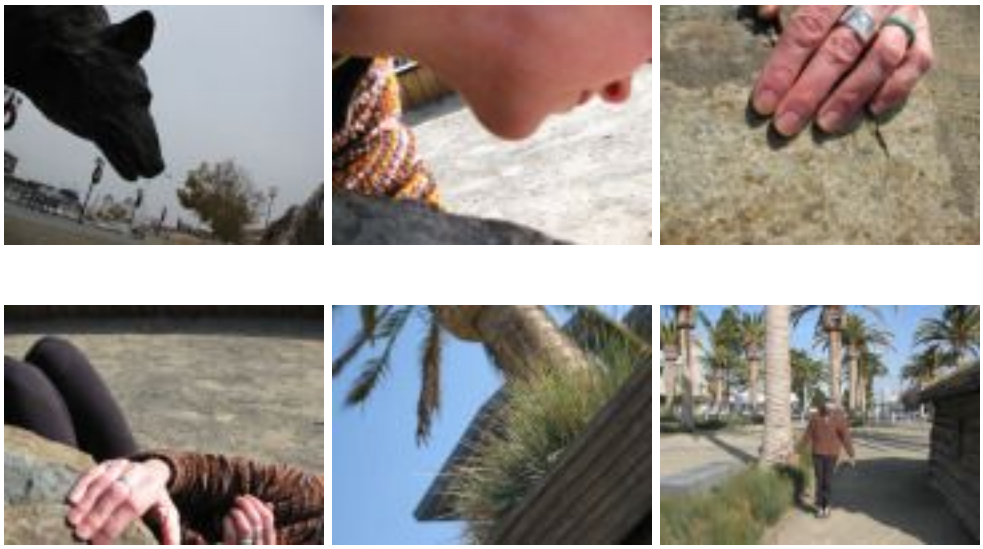
December 4, 2009

by Margit Galanter

This is mg. Today we met at North Jack London Square, at his heartland; half of his log cabin sprouting, palm trees in rows, a saloon – the wild wild west simulacrum. It is a great space to dance because the sun shows up, very open, sand floor with a solid base, some human traffic but not too much, an occasional holy whistle of a train, a theater. Part of this tuning exploration for me is learning about this great place, Oakland. Nothing like investigating a space by tuning in.

Today, we extended the inversions from last week (subject-object through haptic/touch) into eyes + vision and moving in space- what it means to feel the movement of your eyes in their sockets, what you see when you move them, and then extending into creating dance phrases with your eyes- little home movies, eyes open and closed, the stillness and movement. Then entering the movement of our body to support it the living pics. Through movement we became the movie makers. To quote Pearl Ubungen, “see eye”. (riff on CI). Hard to explain. Better to do. I felt when I moved my eyes, I was connecting into the (re)wiring of my being, like the loooong hearty stems of a lotus into the depths of wet muddy earth.

How does and doesn’t the stillness signify the end of a phrase? Tracking my desire to move and to be still, letting the images arise, and its kind-of converse, to enact it (in a more conscious way)? When the public entered in, when did they become part of the scenery, less in my conscious phasic attention, and fade into environment? How do I bond with the objects with my eyes open in seeing? When I shifted my focus to “space” rather than object, I found my whole embodiment shift into a spacious periphery-esque feeling, and I had to conscously shift my focus to experience the image as outside, the view, rather than telescoping into my sensing.



When you take it into the image space, the world seems to dimensionalize even further, wow- the world opens up. Bring in the camera, and a whole other element emerges- it made some of these attributes hyberbolic, narrowed others, due to the parameters of holding the camera … of viewing through a lens

separate from the round eye … of considering that an image would be fixed, an exponential set of layers of observation.

gothic

November 24, 2009

by Margit Galanter

We walked up to Liz's house, and already a scene was set for us to live up to: massive trees, gusting winds, a set of stairs leading up to a huge house, patchworked and a garden filled with so many delights – rosehips, flowers I have never seen before, cracked sculptures, strange nooks with ponds, and the rain was beginning. Luckily, the apartment on the first floor was indeed empty and we had this old set of a maze of rooms to play in. really unusual home, all cleaned and ready for someone to move into, tin cans of varnish and curtains and paint smell aside.

We worked this first day with haptic sense, with touch, with the unique peculiarity of the subject object pole- what does it mean to touch to feel oneself, and to feel the other? I was very aware this time that my speed and pressure have a big effect on where my attention turns.

solo, in collaboration with the space. partners. building from movement and stillness into later a more open run, where we could work with the calls "sustain", "reverse" and "pause". really all u need. I danced with Mario. The first time, it got going just as

I was noticing the set of glass beads that looked like leaves on strings or grandma's trousseau (something from a past that isn't mine). Is memory synonymous with imagination? I heard Lisa say this on the video with Marlon the other day. I am going back into the material, craving some kind of depth of research, so grateful to have this opportunity to work with these uniquely creative folks, each from a different domain of my life experience. Coming together.

The calls started right from the beginning and it was the calls that recognized we were going, was the calls that gave the looking and reading thru touch a sense of dance. Was it reverse, that first call? So early, made the mundane (if multisensoriality can be so) come alive into this.

The house was deceptively sweet. Something so warm about it, or is that Liz's hospitality? Is there an or when we are dealing with space, with imagination, with experience? Seems that the or just opens up another doorway to a point of view.

when we returned and watched one another's partners, it was so nice to see such a different way of working. to remember that we had a score- when in doubt, touch to feel yourself, to feel the other. just something that simple, so deceptively rich with complexity, can get the motor running.

In that room, we like atoms, bouncing off and into and through, making dance.

Jai’s reflections from 11/20

on November 23, 2009

by Jai

I recall that Margit shared something from Gibson about “sense/sensation creates image.” This is how I remember it.

I was struck by the idea of creating an image of self through movement, through touch, through exploring the environment–or architecture, as Mario put it. That all of that could actually shape you. And that you could work toward it.

For me an image of self has been completely illusive. However, recent events in my life have shown me a path toward a true image of self, to which I am working toward. It occurred to me that tuning scores could help me define and refine that image on a moment-to-moment basis, that I could use it to help me become more clearer to myself. This is my hope.

I found myself referencing “moving to sense self” and “moving to sense the environment” when I went out dancing the other night. I explored the steps that led up onto the stage. I spent a lot of time making contact with the walls, then the walls and the steps together. I experienced the texture of the floor. When it got too crowded or the beat became too repetitive, I returned to “moving to sense self,” or I made contact with something.

That contact, now that I think about it, could also be the physical or non-physical contact with other people dancing.

For me the tuning scores seem to be another way to approach contact improv. We started individually and then worked in pairs and when I watched the others I remember thinking, “that looks like contact.” Contact improvisation, for me, has always been somewhat difficult, because it involves touch and trust. I get so anxious and hold so much fear about my body coming into contact with another body that I lose focus and become lost. The tuning scores can provide a different way into thinking about touch and sensation, in which the body of your partner is just as part of the environment as the floor, the ladder, the curtain rod. The body is a structure that holds information to be read, which then shapes you. For me the tuning scores maintain a boundary between self and other, which actually makes me understand contact better, which actually makes me less afraid to come into contact.

-Jai